

saw-pit, and in the cloisters were found a number of skulls and human bones. On the 22nd of February, 1712, were dug up a large parcel of glazed tiles of different colours. A great number of them were taken to the house of Mr. Walburg, of Pilgrate, and there employed, as they had been before, in flooring a room. From stone pillars and windows which were also dug up, Mr. Walburg describes the structure as having been very magnificent, and is of opinion that some of the rooms, whether for convenience or curiosity, had been paved with glazed tiles, of different colours, such as those dug out of the ruins. Several pieces of painted glass were found during these excavations also, and one piece, it is thought, must have been used for flooring, as it appeared of too thick a substance, and too heavily painted, to be available as a medium for the admission of light. The ascertainment of such a fact, as far as possible, would certainly be interesting at the present moment, when glass is about to be applied as a novelty for various purposes.

A general idea of the dimensions of this ancient edifice may be formed from calculations made by Mr. Walburg, though his description may be, what it is alleged by Mr. Foster to be, somewhat florid and imaginary. "The west front," he says, "appears to have been 20 yards long; the fourth front 10 yards. The chapel, standing on the north side, may easily be discerned to have been 60 yards long and 20 yards wide; and the end of the chapel westward seems to have ranged along the cloisters, which are the same length and breadth with the chapel, which seems to range even with and join to the last front, as the cloisters do to the west. The last front is also 20 yards long—so that the whole has been an entire square, and in the middle thereof very plainly appears a curious and complete court, being exactly 30 yards every way."

This convent was founded by one Fleming, a wealthy inhabitant of Stamford; and the care of finishing it was committed to the Archdeacon of Richmond. The precise date of its erection, however, is quite uncertain. It was granted,—6 Edw. VI.,—by the King to Edward, Lord Clinton. The Lord Treasurer Burghley died possessed of the site in 1598; and it later became the inheritance of the Marquis of Exeter.

Religious houses such as this were very numerous in Stamford and its vicinity, there being no less than eight or nine. The following quaint extract is from the "Survey and Antiquities of the Towne of Stamford," written by Richard Butcher, Gent., "sometime town clerk of the same."

"To manifest the profitable and pleasant situation of this towne, the monks, friars, and nunnies of those superstitious times (like so many rats or mice, which make choyce to feede of the daintiest cheese) made choyce of this place to build several receptacles. As one chiefe of them—

They plant themselves in fairest plott,
For pasture, wood, and spring;
Nor grief, nor care, come to their lot:
When others sigh they sing.

For in and about this towne they had no less than eight several cells or monasteries."

ENGINEERS NOT AGENTS BINDING COMPANIES.—In the case of Mr. Sykes, a levelling engineer, engaged by Mr. Higgins, the acting engineer of a projected South and Midlands Railway, against Major Leonard Moss Cooper, a provisional director, it was found by Mr. Justice Erle, on the western circuit, at Bristol, 14th August, that "he could not hold that an engineer had an implied authority to bind a company as its agent. It was analogous to the case of a person employing a builder to erect a house. It could not be said that the builder was his agent, with authority to bind him to the employment. Artisans would be required to erect the building, but if they wished to be employed upon the credit of the principal, they must apply to him." The plaintiff was accordingly nonsuited.

COOLING OF SUN-HEATED ROOFS.—A simple and obvious sort of remedy, for an evil, which, we understand, has caused much inconvenience and probably disease during the present hot summer, has been lately suggested; namely, whitewash applied over the outside of the roof.

Correspondence.

FALL NECESSARY IN KID-SHAPED SEWERS.

The Editor of *THE BUILDER* would oblige a regular subscriber by informing him what fall is considered sufficient in egg-shaped street sewers to keep clean by means of surface and roof water only, entering therein from various house drains and street grates.

August 5, 1846.

* * The greater the body of water flowing the less fall, and conversely, the less the body of water the greater the fall required. But in ordinary cases, the fall should not be less than 3 inches per 100 feet.

THE QUEEN'S LONDON PALACE.

SIR,—A parliamentary paper just published states that the sum of 150,000*l.* is to be laid out on Buckingham Palace, and that it is contemplated to advance the east front and take down the marble arch. Whether the latter should ever have been erected is not now the question, but it appears, after it has cost an enormous outlay (I believe 70,000*l.*), to be an act of wasteful expenditure to take it down. The palace itself has been the subject of critical censure ever since it was altered from its former plain character, and all the money which has been or may be expended upon it will never render it suitable for a royal residence, for the circumstances connected with its situation must always remain the same. Surely it would be wiser, instead of throwing good money after bad, and laying out still further sums upon a low, damp, unhealthy spot, to erect at once a proper London residence for our sovereigns; and what situation can be fitter for this purpose than the site of Kensington Palace, high, dry, and healthy, with the finest of our parks in its foreground; and I would put in a word for the palace to be built in the style which was brought to such perfection by our Tudor rulers, a style pre-eminently English, and one in which the favourite royal architect is more conversant than with the classic styles.

My scheme is not so expensive as may appear at first sight, for, firstly, the expense of keeping up Kensington Palace would be saved; secondly, I conceive that an additional 100,000*l.* would be quite enough beyond the sum proposed for enlarging Buckingham Palace, since we know how much more costly lofty columns and heavy architraves are than Gothic enrichments; thirdly, I would devote Buckingham Palace to the purposes (among others) of the National Gallery, for which the state rooms on the upper floor of the Palace would serve admirably. They are 32 feet high, and could be lighted from above, and these alone would form a suite of seven splendid rooms; and as there has been long since an impression abroad, that at some time or other the national collection of pictures, and the Royal Academy exhibitions, must be in different buildings, this would be an opportunity of effecting the separation. And by removing the national collection from Trafalgar-square, observe what a great improvement may be made in the interior of the building for the purposes of the Royal Academy. As it would be no longer required for two distinct objects, the floor might be filled up in the central hall to the level of the two present sets of rooms, and the partitions between the small rooms being removed, there would remain a magnificent suite of nine rooms, extending upwards of 450 feet in length. A few hundreds would effect this alteration, which would permit a larger admission than usual of works of art to the annual exhibitions; and, what is of more consequence, the walls would not be so crowded with pictures, nor the rooms with spectators as heretofore.

I have thus pointed out a plan, which seems to embody several objects, highly desirable to all concerned. The sovereign would obtain a properly planned palace (*ab initio*) on a healthy spot, instead of a patched-up affair; the public would have an additional and delightful place for exercise in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, almost equal in extent to the Green Park; our exhibitions would have ample space, and the cost saved in erecting a new national gallery (which has been talked of) would pay for the additional outlay at the New Palace.—I remain, Sir, &c.

17th August, 1846.

G. R. F.

Miscellaneous.

THE COLISEUM. ROME.—"It is no fiction," writes Dickens, "but plain sober, honest truth, to say—so suggestive and distinct is it at this hour—that, for a moment, actually in passing in, they who will, may have the whole great pile before them, as it used to be; with thousands of eager faces staring down into the arena, and such a whirl of strife and blood and dust, going on there, as no language can describe. Its solitude, its awful beauty, and its utter desolation, strike upon the stranger, the next moment, like a softened sorrow: and never in his life, perhaps, will he be so moved and overcome by any sight not immediately connected with his own affections and afflictions. To see it crumbling there, an inch a year; its walls and arches overgrown with green; its corridors open to the day; the long grass growing in its porches; young trees of yesterday springing up on its ragged parapets and bearing fruit—chance produce of the seeds dropped there by the birds who build their nests within its chinks and crannies; to see its pit of fight filled up with earth, and the peaceful cross planted in the centre; to climb into its upper halls, and look down on ruin, ruin, ruin, all about it; the triumphal arches of Constantine, Septimius Severus, and Titus; the Roman Forum; the Palace of the Cæsars; the temples of the old religion, fallen down and gone; is to see the ghost of Old Rome—wicked, wonderful old city—haunting the very ground on which its people trod. It is the most impressive, the most stately, the most solemn, grand, majestic, mournful sight, conceivable. Never in its bloodiest prime, can the sight of the gigantic Coliseum, full and running over with the lustiest life, have moved one heart, as it must move all who look upon it now, a ruin. God be thanked—a ruin!" Again: "By way of contrast, we rode out into old ruined Rome, after all this firing and booming, to take our leave of the Coliseum. I had seen it by moonlight before (I never could get through a day without going back to it), but its tremendous solitude that night is past all telling. The ghostly pillars in the Forum; the triumphal arches of old emperors; those enormous masses of ruin which were once their palaces; the grass-grown mounds that mark the graves of ruined temples; the stones of the Via Sacra, smooth with the tread of feet in ancient Rome; even these were dimmed, in their transcendent melancholy, by the dark ghost of its bloody holidays, erect and grini, haunting the old scene; despoiled by pillaging popes and fighting princes, but not laid; wringing wild hands of weed, and grass, and bramble; and lamenting to the night in every gap and broken arch—the shadow of its awful self, immovable!"

THE MIDDLE ROW OBSTRUCTION, HOLBORN.—We are glad to observe, that our suggestion that this nuisance ought now to be altogether cleared away, has been so far already acted on by the Holborn Paving Commissioners, some of whom have waited on the Lord Mayor, as a Commissioner of Public Improvement, and more especially interested in the clearing away of all obstructions in the way of the principal entrances to the city, and have succeeded in at least engaging his lordship's interest and good wishes to the cause. Lord Morpeth also has specially visited the spot, and considers the project a highly important one.

GAS FOR ILLUMINATION DERIVED FROM WATER.—In a paper in the *Bulletin du Musée d'Industrie*, M. Jobard, in describing the result of his experiments on gases for illumination, states that he caused hydrogen gas, obtained by the distillation of water, to take up hydrocarbons produced by the distillation of coal gas at the moment of formation; and that twice or thrice the quantity could be obtained than by the ordinary method. The necessity of purifying, he remarks, is done away with, and particularly when fish or other oils are employed. In experiments made with more than 1,500 feet of gas, watched for several hours, it was found that 111 feet of gas were produced from every pound of oil.

DECORATIONS, BIRMINGHAM TOWN-HALL.—A correspondent complains justly, that in the local accounts of this work the architects and decorator are not named. They are Messrs. Edge and Avery of Birmingham, and Mr. Grace of London.